

Sherlynn Reid, a lifetime advocate of diversity and racial balance in Oak Park, retired as Director of Community Relations for the Village of Oak Park, Illinois.

Oak Park is a vital, exciting community, home to more than 53,000 residents of different cultures, races, ethnicities, professions, life-styles, religions, ages and incomes. Diversity is highly prized, promoted, and nurtured in this community; and it has played an important role in defining the economic, cultural, and social character of this unique community.

Oak Park works hard to ensure a desirable quality of life. Oak Park established a Citizens Community for Human Rights and the Community Relations Commission in 1963 to assure all residents of equal service and treatment. The commission works to improve intergroup relations without regard for race, color, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. It works to ensure good human race and community relations and reduce tensions, and acts as a hearing panel for resolution of discrimination.

In 1968, the Village Board approved one of the Nation's first local fair housing ordinances, outlawing discrimination. In 1973, the Village Board approved the Oak Park Diversity Statement.

Sherlynn Reid started at Village Hall as a Community Relations Representative in 1973 and became Acting Community Relations Director in 1977. Shortly afterwards, she was appointed Director of Community Relations. The Community Relations Department enforces the Village's Human Rights Ordinance, the Fair Housing Policy and promotes Oak Park's Racial Diversity Policy. The Department participates in block organizing, community safety programs, conducts multi-cultural training and networks with community agencies and groups.

Miss Reid was instrumental in creating the Committee of Tomorrow's Schools, the quota ordinance of 1974, the equity assurance ordinance, and the organization of the gang and drug task force. She serves as volunteer in charge of girls guidance for the John C. Vaughan Scholarship Cotillion and is the youth chair for the West Town's chapter of LINKS Incorporated, a national service organization for young and adult women.

She has a special place in her heart for the annual Friends of the Library used book sale, which each year now occupies an entire floor of the Oak Park/River Forest High School. Village Manager Carl Swenson said, "I can think of no other person who has had such a positive impact on this community. She is irreplaceable. It is a loss for us, but she is not leaving the community, she will still be here."

Reid responded with typical modesty. "I will miss it. I enjoyed my job. I may

get all the attention for what they do, but a lot of people in the community have added to what I have done. The people in this community are key, and I have enjoyed working for and with them. I feel it is crucial the community remain racially diverse. It is not a one or two-person job."

Sherlynn Reid plans to spend more time with her daughters and grandchildren but has promised to remain active in the community. She intends to finish writing two books, *My Oak Park*, and another one on her family.

Sherlynn Reid leaves behind a living legacy, a legacy of love and respect, a legacy of struggle for equality and fairness, a legacy of building unity based on our infinite diversity, a legacy of unlimited economic and cultural growth and prosperity based on the fullest participation of every resident.

Her legacy will continue to develop, and regardless of her retirement, she will continue to help shape the future of her community. We congratulate Sherlynn on the occasion of her retirement, and look forward to working with her for many more years to come in continuing to build an outstanding community.

U.S.-CHINA WTO AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to report to my colleagues of the good news we received just yesterday that American and Chinese trade negotiators have reached what appears to be a very good agreement to bring China into the World Trade Organization.

Now, in plain English, this is a win-win-win deal for American values and American interests. First, it is a win for fairness. In the world of global trade, the United States plays by rules. We open our market to everyone, which is a huge benefit to America's consumers and businesses alike. But, unfortunately, as we all know, everyone else does not follow those same rules. They do not all fall in line that way.

Up until now, China has been at the top of the list of those who fail to follow those rules.

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But now they are agreeing to play by the rules. Of course, we know it will take a lot of diligence and effort to actually press the Chinese to live up to their commitments, but this is the only way that we can move forward.

Second, this is a win for our world-class American workers and businesses. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Chinese market has largely been closed off from foreign competition. America's world-class businesses, manufacturers,

high-tech companies, entertainers, farmers, financial institutions, and on and on and on, have never been able to effectively compete for sales among the 1.3 billion consumers in China.

Now, of course, we need a reality check here. Let us not live under some illusion that China is the key to the future of the world economy. But let us also agree that China is an important emerging economy in the key Asian-Pacific region. Business leaders across the globe and in every part of America know that being shut out of China, especially as China opens up to the world, would be a huge mistake. We finally have a deal to get our guys on to the playing field so that we, as Americans, can compete.

And guess what? I am very confident, Mr. Speaker, that our guys will win most of the time, because America's businesses and America's workers are the most competitive and the most efficient on the face of the Earth.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this is a win for American values inside China, values like the rule of law and personal freedom. Again, let us not lose sight of reality. There is a lot wrong with how the Chinese government does business. We all know about that, and we all decry that. Just like it has not followed the rules of international trade and business, it has also failed to follow the rules of fundamental human rights and freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this trade deal, which will bolster the rule of law in Chinese business and trade dealings, will move individual rights forward in China.

I was especially pleased that Martin Lee, the leading advocate of democracy for the Chinese people, based in Hong Kong, supports bringing China into the world trade system of rules and laws for this reason. That is certainly a very good and positive sign.

Mr. Speaker, the relationship between the United States and China is both complex and varied. No agreement, no trade deal, can solve every problem or answer every question. But this trade agreement moves the ball forward on very key issues.

It is a win-win-win for fairness, new markets, and our Western values in China. It is a good deal for America.

HONORING NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TANCREDO). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, "change ordinarily evolves over hundreds of years, but when a fundamental difference in the way we view the world comes quickly, the shift in our thinking is called revolution." Such revolution "takes place not because the governing institutions have had a change

of heart, but because the pressure brought to bear by individuals organized for collective action has added the necessary impetus."

These words were spoken by Kenneth Jernigan, past president of the National Federation of the Blind, a revolutionary organization with the philosophy that blind people, if organized throughout the land, have the strength and purpose to change the course of history.

The NFB was founded in 1940 at a time when the opportunities for blind persons were lacking and society's attitudes towards them was, sadly, one of misunderstanding and negativity. This was also a time when there was no rehabilitation for blind persons, no libraries, no opportunity for higher education, no jobs in Federal service, no hope in the professions, no State or Federal civil rights protections.

But that was another time, another generation. Headquartered in Baltimore, the National Federation of the Blind is today what its founders dreamed it would become, a truly revolutionary organization ensuring that blind people get equal treatment and a fair shake. It is the Nation's largest consumer advocacy organization of blind persons and is considered the leading force in the blindness field today.

With 50,000 members, the NFB's influence is felt throughout the Nation, with affiliates in all 50 States, plus Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, and over 700 local chapters.

The mission of the NFB is twofold. First, it strives to help blind persons achieve self-confidence and self-respect. Second, the organization acts as a vehicle for collective self-expression by the blind. These goals are achieved through the organization's numerous initiatives, which include educating the public about blindness and literature and information services, ensuring that blind persons have access to aids and appliances and other adaptive equipment, increasing emphasis on the development and evaluation of technology, and continued support for blind persons and their families through job opportunities and special services.

NFB's commitment is critical to the 750,000 people in the United States who are blind and the 50,000 that will become blind each year.

Recently I participated as the honorary chair in the NFB's Newsline Night '99. This yearly event makes it possible to support one of the organization's important services, an electronic text-to-speech telephone-based service which delivers seven national and over 20 local newspapers to blind persons throughout the country.

Technology enables national and local news to be available on Newsline by 7:00 a.m. each morning. The service began as a pilot project in the Balti-

more-Washington area, and Newsline Baltimore began delivering newspapers and other material via local phone lines in 1996. This revolutionary idea assists approximately 11 million Americans who cannot read regular print but would enjoy the receipt of news and information over a cup of coffee like the rest of the seeing population.

In addition to the Newsline service, NFB supports a job opportunity service, a materials center containing literature and aids and appliances used by the blind, and the International Braille and Technology Center for the Blind, which is the world's largest and most complete evaluation and demonstration center for speech and Braille technology.

When looking in total at all the services that the NFB provides and all of its accomplishments, one can say without hesitation that this organization is truly revolutionary.

I encourage the organization to continue its revolutionary crusade towards full citizenship and human dignity for equal rights and for the right to work with others and do for yourselves. I also challenge all of us who have sight to recognize that we are all human and, thus, alike in most ways. However, we each have unique characteristics that allow us to contribute to society in special ways. Respect for such differences implies, then, just allowing someone in. It implies that we have something to learn and a benefit to gain from others who are different from us.

I close with a quote from Jacobus TenBroek, the first president of the NFB, to summarize this concept. He said, "In order to achieve the equality that is their right, in order to gain the opportunity that is their due, in order to attain the position of full membership in the community that is their goal, the blind have continuing need for the understanding and sympathy and liberality of their sighted neighbors and fellow citizens. The greatest hope of the blind is that they may be seen as they are, not as they have been portrayed; and since they are neither wards nor children, their hope is to be not only seen but also heard in their own accents and for whatever their cause may be worth."

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I just would like to spend some time tonight, and I am going to be joined by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), talking about the unfinished business of this Congress and of this House of Representatives.

We know that it is likely, either tomorrow or within the next few days, that the Republican leadership will bring up probably an omnibus appropriations bill, better known as the budget, I guess, for most people.

We, as Democrats, have been very critical of the Republican leadership because since October 1, which was the beginning of the fiscal year, they have not been able to complete the budget, the appropriations process. And that process now is, I guess, about 6 weeks overdue and they have not been able to effectively legislate and keep the Government going by providing the budget that we need for this fiscal year.

We have also been critical of the fact that already, even though they keep bringing up the issue of Social Security and spending the Social Security surplus, already, if we look at the appropriations bills that they passed, they clearly have dipped into the Social Security Trust Fund.

At the same time, they have also broken the caps. One of our colleagues, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), was here just a few minutes ago giving a special order and talking about how the caps under the Balanced Budget Act have really become a thing of the past.

But I did not really want to dwell on this tonight because I think it is evident that the budget process has been a mess. But, hopefully, over the next few days, there will be a budget passed; and we will have an appropriations and a budget for this fiscal year.

The larger problem, though, I think is the unfinished business of this Congress and the unfinished business of this House of Representatives.

Republicans are, basically, ready to leave town now, not having addressed most of the concerns that my constituents bring to my attention. And these are the concerns that the average family has in this country, whether it is Medicare, seniors asking me about the need for a prescription drug benefit; HMO reform, which myself and my colleague from Connecticut have been on this floor so many times in the last couple of years demanding that the Patients' Bill of Rights be passed.

We finally did manage to get it passed, but so far there has been no conference between the House and the Senate on the Patients' Bill of Rights, and the Republican leadership is obviously just trying to kill HMO reform by not having the conference take place and hoping that the issue will go away.

I just mention those two issues because I think they are very important. But there are a lot of other issues: gun safety, the issue of school construction, campaign finance reform. There are many that need to be addressed.

I would like to yield to my colleague, the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO), but before I do that, I